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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	USSR (Komi ASSR)	REPORT NO.	[REDACTED]
SUBJECT	Forced Labor Camp at Vorkuta	DATE DISTR.	16 February 1954
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 THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
 (FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. [REDACTED] The entire Vorkuta area contained about 30,000 prisoners. Eight thousand guards were used to guard these prisoners. [REDACTED] the prisoners were composed of the following nationalities: 20-25 percent were Russians, a slightly greater number were Ukrainians, and about ten percent were Germans. In addition, there were Latvians, Caucasians, Romanians, and Koreans. The national groups were all mixed together, and informant did not notice any national antagonisms within the camp. Several Ukrainians, called Banderovitsi, mentioned that there was a partisan movement in the Western Ukraine. About three percent of the prisoners were Old Believers, as a sign of which they wore beards. They did not go to work on Sundays.

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2. [REDACTED] About a year before Stalin's death, life in the Vorkuta camps began to be easier. The prisoners began to earn money for their labor, with which they could buy things in a well-stocked canteen, though at very high prices. The barracks were always open and the prisoners had the right to enter and leave them at will. The guards no longer had the right to shoot without warning. The attitude of the guards and administrative personnel toward the prisoners became much more polite; the prisoners were addressed as "you" instead of "thou". There were fewer beatings and solitary confinements. Each prisoner had a sheet and a blanket. There were fewer bedbugs and no more lice. On the day of Stalin's death everybody was pleased, including the guards. In general, prisoners now converse much more freely among themselves. Informant was of the opinion that the life of the prisoners was better than that of many collective farm workers.

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STATE	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC			
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[redacted]

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3. There were three or four doctors in the camp. One of them, [redacted] (fnu), was an extremely unpleasant man and a poor doctor. All of the other medical personnel, including the medical assistants and nurses, were extremely kind to the prisoners. A Jewish doctor was nice to the German prisoners in spite of the fact that the Nazis had liquidated his family. 25X1
4. There was a revolt in Vorkuta in 1948. All of the ringleaders were shot except one, who was a former Hero of the Soviet Union. He enjoyed great respect among the prisoners.
- 25X1 5. [redacted] some anti-regime leaflets which appeared in the camp, but does not know who wrote or distributed them.
- 25X1 6. [redacted] about 20 percent of the prisoners [redacted] were active foes of the regime, and that about 60 percent of them would join an uprising if one started. At present, the prisoners are particularly tough on informers, and some have been killed. 25X1

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